

Digital Filing and VBA's Mail Modernization Summary of Major Issues April 2021

Major Issues Impacting Digital Filing

1. Data Validation Error: Address of Claimant. The D2D program has implemented a city, state, and zip code validation. We suspect some of these errors are the result of a city name being spelled incorrectly or shortened. Because the city, state and zip code validation are based on USPS, if USPS does not shorten the name of a city (for example Mt. Juliet vs. Mount Juliet or Mt. Home vs. Mountain Home), we are seeing errors and not able to successfully transmit using D2D.
 - A couple of recommendations to help reduce this data validation error.
 - Spell out the entire city name in the VetraSpec database for subsequent form population.
 - Always include a city, state and zip code in the VetraSpec database.
 - Use [usps.com "look up a zip code"](https://usps.com/look-up-a-zip-code) to validate addresses.

2. Treatment Dates. If a federal facility is listed, dates must be populated. If a veteran is continuing to receive treatment at a VA medical center, use the date you complete the 526EZ as the end treatment date in block 17 of the 526EZ. Treatment dates in the future or leaving the blocks empty prevents successful D2D filing. A correct example is below:

17. LIST VA MEDICAL CENTER(S) (VAMC) AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD) MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITIES (MTF) WHERE YOU RECEIVED TREATMENT AFTER DISCHARGE FOR YOUR CLAIMED DISABILITY(IES) LISTED IN ITEM 16 AND PROVIDE TREATMENT DATES.	
A. ENTER THE DISABILITY TREATED AND NAME/LOCATION OF THE TREATMENT FACILITY <i>If a treatment facility is listed here, you must enter complete treatment dates in B.</i>	B. DATE(S) OF TREATMENT
Alvin C. York VAMC	January 2018 1 2017 To December 31
Memphis VAMC	January 2020 1 2019 To January 3
	Month Day Year To Month Day
	Month Day Year To Month Day

If the veterans is unsure about exact treatment dates, use at least one year prior to suspected treatment to capture all possible treatment records. Do not leave these fields blank when federal treatment records are identified.

Background on Digital Filing and Supporting VBA's Mail Automation Efforts

The Appeals Division provides quality review feedback that negatively impacts the Departments ability to file claims and associated materials digitally. Much of this feedback is also applicable to how TDVS can better support VBA's mail automation efforts.

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) is working to automate its mail processes to provide faster claims processing for veterans and claimants. In support of this effort VBA

identified concrete actions VSOs can take to support faster claims processing:

- Use Electronic Filing
 - TDVS is already supporting this effort by using Digits-to-Digits or Direct Submit for nearly all claims and compensation mail filed through the Appeals Division.
- Double Check Form Completion
 - TDVS is already supporting this effort through its quality review program. We have frequently identified and shared information to support form completion and successful electronic filing.
 - VBA has requested service organizations take the following efforts to speed the delivery of benefits: VBA receives many forms that are incomplete and without signature - this delays claims processing
 - Submit legible, quality documents
 - Ensure all checkboxes are completely filled-in
 - If information is not applicable, leave the field blank; do not use "N/A"
 - Do not use acronyms for Veterans Service Organization names or claimed disabilities
 - Keep handwritten notes clear with BLOCK letters written in dark ink
 - Sign and date forms clearly with dark ink

Digits to Digits (D2D) program remains the Appeals Division's preferred method to file eligible forms, which include the VA Form 21-22, VA Form 21-0966 and VA Form 21-526EZ. Tips to help ensure the forms you generate are D2D eligible can be found here - [Digits to Digits and Digital Filing Fact Sheet](#)